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PATENT APPLICATION

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re the Application of

Noriyuki MATSUMOTO et al.

Application No.: 09/937,623

Filed: December 28, 2001

Docket No.: 109667

For: FINGERPRINT IMAGE EVALUATION METHOD AND FINGERPRINT  
VERIFICATION DEVICE

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
Washington, D. C. 20231

Sir:

Prior to initial examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please replace claim 8 as follows:

8. (Amended) A method as in claim 4, wherein a plurality of reference lines are provided within the fingerprint image, the characteristic determining step comprises the step of obtaining a spectrum characteristic for each of the plurality of provided reference lines, and the evaluating step comprises the step of evaluating the amount of fingerprint ridgeline information contained within the fingerprint image based upon each spectrum characteristic obtained from each reference line.

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending. By this Preliminary Amendment, claim 8 is amended to eliminate multiple dependencies. Prompt and favorable consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

The attached Appendix includes marked-up copies of the rewritten claim (37 C.F.R. §1.121(c)(1)(ii)).

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Attached: APPENDIX

Date: December 28, 2001

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## APPENDIX

### Changes to Claims:

The following is a marked-up version of the amended claim:

8. (Amended) A method as in ~~claim 4~~claims 4-7, wherein a plurality of reference lines are provided within the fingerprint image, the characteristic determining step comprises the step of obtaining a spectrum characteristic for each of the plurality of provided reference lines, and the evaluating step comprises the step of evaluating the amount of fingerprint ridgeline information contained within the fingerprint image based upon each spectrum characteristic obtained from each reference line.

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